

EX-MAYOR

Hon. CARTER H. HARRISON

OF CHICAGO.

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HIS OWN ACCOUNT OF HIS

Trip Across the Continent.

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***SURPRISING FERTILITY OF THE PRAIRIES  
OF THE FAR NORTH REGION.***

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GRANDEUR OF THE MOUNTAIN SCENERY  
ALONG THE

Canadian Pacific Railway.

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## CORRESPONDENCE OF THE "CHICAGO MAIL."

VICTORIA, British Columbia, Aug. 3.—Having resolved to make a race with the sun around the world, it became a matter of some moment what route we should pursue. We recognized the fact that old Sol moved on a smooth and beaten track. For countless eras he has moved majestically along the same road. No ups and downs. No stations where he has to stop to take on food or water; comets feed his fiery chargers; their tails, whisking around millions of miles, fan their foaming flanks. Worn out worlds drop into their mangers to feed them without the necessity of a halt. Asteroids and bursting meteors furnish their driver with whip-cracks to encourage them to maintain their speed. Their own fiery nostrils light them along their boundless path. Countless millions of ages ago the mighty Eternal awoke them from their beginningless sleep when his fiat, "Let there be light," reverberated throughout chaotic space, and rolling through its dark chasms and caves, echoed from its frowning crags, caught and returned from limitless heights, was obeyed, and "Light was." Their next rest will be when comes a crash of worlds, and the same Eternal shall shout in wrathful thunder, "It is ended."

Ours was an unequal task. We knew we would be handicapped, not only from day to day, but from hour to hour; we would have mountains to climb, valleys to span, oceans to cross, and storms and tempests to turn us from our track. We would have to pick our course through countless obstacles by day and to feel our way among countless dangers by night. Knowing our rival would have to travel a thousand miles an hour within the tropics we determined to go far to the north, where contracted degrees would reduce our mileage to nearly half the tropical distance.

We therefore left Chicago for far northern Manitoba. We ran through wooded Wisconsin, rested a few minutes at ambitious St. Paul; Were handsomely entertained and driven around by its democratic mayor, dashed through the grain fields of Northern Minnesota, entered the dominions of her much-jubileed majesty, and started on our race at high-boomed Winnipeg, in the 50th degree north latitude.

By the way, the "boom" at the capital of Manitoba was not, as many have thought, a bursting "bomb." It is a well laid out and handsome city of 23,000 souls. The boom gave it a good start, and, like our great fire, made many a rich speculator bite financial dust, but left improvements, which, but for the speculative fever, would not have been commenced for years to come. The city has many fine buildings of private owners, and a beautiful city hall, three elegant fire-engine houses, several well-paved streets, and a mill which turns out 900 barrels of flour daily. The people resemble in dress and movements the thriving, bustling population of our North-western States much more than they do the self-satisfied and slow-looking Canuck of Ontario and eastern Canada. At night they were walking about with pleasure-seeking energy, rather than the list-

less, slow, aimless step of those we see along the railroads which traverse among their brothers of the east.

Manitoba—by the way, they lay the accent upon the “o” instead of on the final “a;” I suspect it to be wrong, for I was told the word is “Manitou” “ba” (God speaks), from the Indian idea that the thunder is louder here than elsewhere—Manitoba is a grand province. From the boundary, stretching north about 150 miles by 120 miles east and west, it is a splendid small-grain country. The land is not held by great individual owners or by syndicates, but in small holdings, rarely larger than a section, and generally not larger than a half. The farms are much better cultivated than in Minnesota. The fields are much freer from weeds and the crops better than anything I saw in the States except a small section near Crookston. I was told the expectation was an average crop of twenty-five bushels to the acre. Some fields, I thought in passing, would nearly touch forty bushels. At Winnipeg we boarded the Canadian Pacific. For a considerable distance the country is perfectly flat, but the soil of great depth; ditches will make it all finely arable. From Portage La Prairie west, the surface of the prairie is undulating, often high rolling, and on to Virden, 109 miles, is as beautiful prairie as one could wish to see. North and south in this belt the same characteristics, I was told by a well-informed gentleman, extended from the United States line to the northern limits of the province.

What cunning chaps the Hudson Bay company people were! For long years they told the world that this was a region only fit for fur-bearing animals. And now that the iron horse has snatched the reins from this great cormorant, we find in this great Northwest a country capable of supporting millions of happy agricultural people. Rivers abound, running in deep cut banks into which the lowest and flattest land can be drained. Wood is not so far off that it cannot be had in sufficient quantities for domestic purposes, and coal fields lie so close to the water courses that it can be transported by water if the rail fails to do the work. In the summer season the sun pours down a flood of heat. My alpaca coat was quite sufficient when standing on the platform, and from ten to five I was constantly tempted to unbutton my vest. The nights are cool now, and we are told are always so. Years ago, when the American cry was “54, 40, or fight,” I was a whig, and twitted the democrats for coming down to 49. I now feel like still twitting my old democratic brethren of the past for not standing up for 54. I am not very acquisitive of territory for our country, but I must confess to a strong feeling that Uncle Sam ought to own from the Superior up to Alaska and on to the Pacific. Let it not be understood that we could do any better for the people than the Dominion is doing. *The people are thriving, and the Canadian Pacific company has built a road with which none of our transcontinental railroads can compare.* It is thoroughly laid, smooth, and finely ballasted. The depots or stations are built with taste, and the bridges are erected with great strength. In the far west, experimental farms are worked so as to give the emigrant actual knowledge of what the soil is capable of producing.

After leaving Virden the country assumes less of a prairie appearance and more of a western plain, but sage brush does not commence for a long distance, and in fact, is light at any place on the road.

Some 200 miles was passed by us at night when I was generally asleep, but occasionally I would look from my

window and was thus able to make a tolerably accurate survey even of the country for these 200 miles. The twilight of this latitude is so long that the traveler is enabled to see much which in more southern climes would be lost in darkness. We left Winnipeg at 9.40 on the 29th. Early on the 30th we were constantly at the windows or on the platform. I would not permit Willie and John to sleep after six o'clock, and refused to permit them to read during the day, as their only way to read what they could see themselves on the page of the passing book of nature.

Indians were occasionally seen at the stations, decked in bright colored blankets, and with faces painted like that of a watering-place belle. Their teepees could be seen near the stations in groups of from four to ten. They all had horns of their old friends, the buffalo, for sale.

Cattle ranches are scattered over the country. After leaving the wheat land, near Virden, I saw far off on the prairie a lady galloping with long skirt on a horse with banded tail. Habitations became scarce and ranches few. Many lakes were passed covered with geese and duck. Sometimes we could see young broods of the latter, about the size of partridges, on small streams not over twenty feet from our train. The plain is now the coteau de Missouri, but is not arid as the same plain is on the Northern Pacific road. The whole country is pleasantly green, with patches of town diversifying the landscape. Occasionally we would see lakes with edges white with alkali running into purple water-weed. Several of the small alkali ponds were dried up and looked like patches of driven snow. The grass is short but thick, and is of the prairie variety, with, I thought, a little buffalo grass intermixed. Frequently for long stretches we would pass among bush openings, which gave a park-like appearance to the plain.

Many of the towns are of good size, from 400 to 800 inhabitants. Two hundred and odd miles west of Winnipeg, at a village named Moosomin, we saw a lawn tennis party and a couple of nickel-plated bicycles ridden by ambitious young men. This, too, in the territory of Assiniboia, and north of western Dakota.

All through the ride on the 30th we were in the region where the buffalo formerly abounded. Hundreds upon hundreds of their old trails were deep furrowed into the prairie, crossing the road from south to north. What countless thousands must, year after year, have trodden in these furrows to have worn them so deep in the dry hard soil. Now and then their bones would bleach the prairie with white patches, and at the stations tons of them were ready for shipment east to make handles for tooth brushes and bone dust for soda fountains. It was sad to think of the vast numbers of these old monarchs of the plains which had been slaughtered in the mad love for killing. The poor Indians, relics of former ages, who are now living upon the bounty of the conquering whites, do not so much arouse my sympathies as does the wanton destruction of the red man's friend—the bison. The Indian would not learn civilization and refused and refuses to obey the order to earn bread by the the sweat of the face. They had to go for civilization's sake; but the buffalo committed no other crime than being the Indian's friend and being an easy target for the wanton murderer. Seventeen years ago I passed, on the Union Pacific, through a herd of many thousands at Platte station. Their beef was plenty and cheap all along the plains, and millions were yearly making their annual migration. For hundreds of miles along the Canadian Pacific are the countless trails they dug into the

soil almost as hard as rock, as they marched in single file, from pasturage to pasturage and from water to water. Now it is said there are not over one or two hundred wild buffalo in the whole land.

As we fly on westward the plain becomes browner and browner, but rarely entirely loses its green, and everywhere there are damp spots where it is of brightest emerald. The great plains on this road have but little of the painful monotony which oppresses one for such great distances on the other Pacific roads. The rolling plains seem to rise and fall like old ocean's swell, always the same, but ever seeming to move and vary. One can watch the swell at sea day after day and not grow weary. These plains affected me in much the same way. I could traverse them again next week with pleasure. They are always fresh to the eye. This, I think, of itself, will make this a favorite route for transcontinental tourists. In my whole ride, too, I was only three or four times troubled by dust, although I rode much of the time on the rear platform. The dusty places were only of a few miles in extent.

At Medicine Hat, 660 miles west of Winnipeg, we crossed the south fork of the Saskatchewan river. Here, and for a long distance, it is a navigable, fine stream some 400 yards wide. Above this place some fifty to a hundred miles are fine coal fields. The coal looked very pure, and one look assured me it was the best cooking coal in America. Before night we should have seen the Rockies, but did not because of the smoky atmosphere. Sixty miles from their foot lies Calgary, a town of 2,000 people, the centre of the great ranch district, where ranches of many thousand horses abound. The grazing country is said to be very fine and extends far south down into Montana. The plains here are very fine and the bunch grass is pretty green. It grows good wheat but better grass. At three o'clock on the morning of the 31st we reached Banff. We stopped over a day and took two baths, one at the hot springs, temperature from 110 to 120°, said to have the specific virtues of the Arkansas springs, and sought for the same class of diseases. I do not think the bath produces the heavy sweats brought about in Arkansas, but still I had to lie for half an hour before I became dry enough to dress. Several hundred feet below this spring are two others, within a hundred feet of each other. One is in a cave, or grotto, about twenty-five feet in diameter, and with a vaulted dome, say thirty feet high, as perfect a dome as if cut by the hammer. It is now entered by an artificial tunnel a hundred feet long and lighted by a natural opening at the apex, about two feet by three. In the grotto is a natatorium, surrounded by pretty stalactites, with water about five feet deep boiling up from the sandy bottom; temperature about 95°. Cold water pours from one of the shell-shaped stalactites in sufficient quantity to make a nice cold shower. One can thus swim around in warm water and then cool off his upper body while from his waist down he is in a warm bath. A hundred feet from this is another large pool, twenty feet across, of about the same size, and, being in the open air, the warm water can be seen boiling up through the sands. Both this and the cave springs have streams flowing from them as large as a first-class fire-engine could pump. The cave spring discharges at its outlet without coloring the soil along the rivulet, while the other makes a deposit as white as lime. This deposit is a magnesiate of lime, impregnated with iron and sulphur. I tested the virtue of the water personally; two weeks ago, having a soft corn between

my toes, I was foolish enough to apply pure carbolic acid. I had done it before with good effect, but this time I repeated it the second night. The result was, for several days before leaving home, I could scarcely walk with any comfort. Under my doctoring one foot got well, but when I reached Banff the other was very painful. I walked 800 feet up to the spring with a bad limp. I took the two baths and sat with my foot in the warm rivulet for a half hour. Result, my foot was virtually well the next day. The hotel accommodations here are not sufficient for the visitors, but we were made very comfortable in a tent. The Canadian Pacific railroad is building a beautiful hotel just at the confluence of the Bow river and the Spray river under the hot spring.\* The hotel will have over two hundred rooms, with ice-cold mountain-spring water throughout the house and bath houses supplied from the hot spring brought down 800 feet in iron pipes. Banff is 4,200 feet above the sea, and is nestled down among mountains rising over 5,000 feet above the hotel, all of them this year with snow on their summits and far down the sides of the deep gorges. The sanitarium and hotel of the railroad is upon the bank of Bow river, now a stream over 400 feet wide, of crystal clearness, slightly whitened by glacier water. This river under the hotel breaks through walls of rock two or more hundred feet high, forming a succession of cascades or rapids sixty feet in fall, in say 140 yards. The views of snow-clad mountains, the river, the cascades, and whirling pool below makes the situation of the hotel the finest I have ever seen. Trout abound in the river of all angling sizes. A lake trout was brought in from Devil's lake, twelve miles off, while I was there, weighing forty-three pounds. Banff is in the National park, containing 260 square miles. With commendable wisdom, the government is building fine roads in this park, laid out by skilled engineers. The railroad hotel is now being plastered. When finished it will make this the finest mountain resort in America. The present accommodations are not bad, but not sufficiently large. In the pure mountain air, however, I found a tent delightful. It was warmed by a stove. Each tent has four little rooms, in each a good bed.

At three o'clock Monday morning we took the west-going train and went to bed; but the early light made us shorten our nap, for we were soon in wildly grand scenery, now rushing through noble passes on the mountain sides, then under precipices lifting thousands of feet above us. Snow-clad mountains were ever standing like grand sentinels on our way. The engine puffs and snorts as it pulls us up the steep grade. The snow gorges crawl down nearer and nearer to us. The snowy peaks seem piled one above the other far above us. The stream we have climbed gets smaller and smaller, till at Mount Stephen we are at the summit, 5,300 feet above the sea, while above us lift the mighty rocky sides of the mountain, almost over our head and 8,200 feet above the rail. The Bow river here begins in a little lake, while close by in a swamp is the fountain of the "Kicking Horse" river, down whose canyons we must go for many a mile. Here starts the Bow, whose waters flow far away into Hudson's bay. There, almost within a stone's throw, starts the other river to carry "Stephens'" icy waters into the Pacific at Georgian bay. Hour after hour we whirl along in ever-rapid curving down the canyon. Lofty mountains are on either side in vast precipices to our right and to our left. We look up on rocks and snow now and then hardened into a glacier. We

\*Since above was written the hotel referred to has been completed and is in full operation

look below from the rock-cut terrace along which we bound. The rushing waters look like a stream of rushing snow—now in cascade then in rapids; never still enough to lose their foam. Hour after hour we are in this scene of grandeur and beauty. I say beauty, for the white snow, the foaming waters, the green trees—these are beautiful. While the mountains, their frowning precipices, their rocky pinnacles piercing the blue sky a mile right over us, these are grand. For sixty miles it is the same grand and beautiful scenery. One little creek has become a river; narrow, but pouring in towards the sea as much water as flows down the Ohio at ordinary stage. At nine o'clock our rushing, roaring river has emptied into the Columbia. It has come up from the United States with its milk-white glacier water. It rolls in rapid current towards the north, washing the foot of Mount Brown twenty miles away. It will bend westward beyond the Selkirk range, at whose western base we will cross it again, after having steamed nearly a hundred miles through yet grander scenery. We cross the river; we look back and see the towering Rockies, we look forward and no great way from us lifts the Selkirk range. The ascent commences at once. First up the Beaver, which near the Columbia passes through a gate one can scarcely believe to be of nature's fashioning. Two vertical slate precipices only a few feet thick lift themselves up like the framework of a portcullis, through which the little river rushes. A gate twenty feet wide set against the gateway would stop the whole stream. Up the river, and then the Bear creek we climb. The river is a few feet below us. Up we go. The river is a hundred, then four hundred, then a thousand feet down. Still up, till far below us—two thousand feet—through the timber and then over the tops of the lofty firs we see it winding through marshy grass, which one of us insists is a wheat bulb. We seem to hang on the mountain's side; now the road is cut through tunnels; then it is timbered out over precipices; we cross a trestle bridge 295 feet above the stream at the bottom of a gorge. We are soon in the heart of the mountain—far up the sides till the snow and rocks are met, magnificent forests of pine and fir, with stems as straight as an arrow, line the road on the valley side and climb above us. I said we were in the mountain's heart. I was too quick. We soon will be, for we break through a pass between two mountains clad in eternal snow. The snow is nearly down to our level, which is now 4,300 feet above the sea. But look! See that white precipice! It is the foot of a mighty glacier, hundreds of feet thick, and pushed down in the hardened stream from the peak, yet far above and beyond its brow.

The scenery now is grand beyond the power of language to paint. One glacier forms upon another. To our right we pass the summit, and two miles on reach Glacier house, a beautiful Swiss chalet, in front of which are beautiful fountains throwing up icy streams. Then, apparently a few hundred yards away to our left, is a monster glacier with foot not far above the level of the road. With a glass we see mighty fissures cracking its surface. It bends over the mountain like a falling curtain. We are told it is a mile and a half wide, nine miles long, and 500 feet deep. Mount Sir Donald is watching its slow descent. Far above the snow, his peak, shaped like a diamond drill pierces the blue sky over 6,000 feet above us. We have to bend our heads back to look upon his pinnacle. They give us a half hour here to look, and eat a first-rate lunch. The descent is now down a silvery thread, called the "Illicilliwaet



river." It tumbles in cascades, and as it tumbles it grows. We get down hill by making iron loops. The Horseshoe bend has nothing to compare with these bends here. We can pitch a marble from our window upon the track below, which we will reach after bending as on the link of a chain. After a while the little silver thread has become a foaming stream, then a rushing river—so strong that it cuts its way between two perpendicular cliffs in a canyon apparently not over twenty-five feet wide, but several hundred feet deep. The river springs through it like a mad man in a leap, then foams along for miles below. At last, after a run of seventy odd miles through the Selkirks, we emerge from them and cross the Columbia, a stream greatly grown since we saw it last a hundred miles back. After awhile we enter another range of mountains—the "Gold range." The scenery in these would be glorious, but we are satisfied with grandeur, and are more delighted by the beautiful lakes, along whose margins we run, than by the mountains above us. We are more delighted with their glassy surface, in which we imagine we see trout, than in looking upon lofty heights. We have made a mistake. We should have stopped at the Glacier house for the next train. This road affords too much of the grand for a continuous ride. We should have made at least three stops, and then each separate ride would have been sufficient for a whole tour. After leaving the "Gold range" we are upon waters which empty into the Frazer river. Before night we pass some beautiful lakes. One of them, the Shuswap, is of very considerable extent; we ran along its shores for over fifty miles. Its width varies from one to four or five miles. Mountains from 2,000 to 3,000 feet high lift themselves above its waters, now by steep ascent, then by sloping benches. Its waters are said to be full of fish; we frequently saw them rising.

Thursday morning, the 2d, we were up very early. We were upon the Frazer. Here we had a different character of scenery from any before seen. The road runs along the bank of the river, perhaps a hundred feet up—nearly all the time on ledges cut into the rock or upon the steeply descending sides of the mountains. We must have gone through thirty tunnels, in length from a few hundred feet to several hundred yards, all cut through the solid granite. The river runs through rocky canyons at the foot of mountains lifting from 2,500 to 4,000 feet. Many of these mountains were of bare rock, others beautifully treed. Behind these, immediately along the river, one other high peak, more or less flecked with snow. Laughing brooks and foaming streams are frequently crossed, which come down the mountains in bounding cascades. The river is a mighty stream of white water rising 500 miles away among mountains covered with eternal snows. It is joined where we struck it by the "Thompson," itself a noble river. It is fed by many smaller streams and by a thousand mountain torrents and rivulets, and appears to carry as much water as the Columbia in Oregon. It flows in turbulent current, now 700 yards wide, then cutting its way through rocky doors not over a hundred feet from jam to jam. Often for miles it rushes in fall almost as fast as a cataract. Below each fall it whirls in angry pools, and on nearly all the ledges jutting over these pools are frames of light wood on which the Indian's winter supply of salmon hangs like red tobacco in a southern field. Indians are down on projecting ledges scooping with a net, shaped like a tennis bat, for finny beauties. Their fishing nets are on nearly every green spot of an acre. Here and there is seen a

Chinese washing gold from the ground. High on the opposite side of the river runs the road built twenty-eight years ago by the government, to the Cariboo mines, 400 miles away. This road often ranges at a dizzy height, and is so narrow that the stage coach passengers must have been in dizzy alarm; that is, if they were other than gold-seekers. For these fellows would have ridden the devil bare-back and never felt a tremor if the dust was at the journey's end. For sixty odd miles we ran in and out of rock hewn tunnels, over trestles, along ledges cut from the solid rock, and over terraces built from many feet below. The rushing river was ever some fifty to two hundred feet below us, while high over our heads or frowning from the opposite side of the canyon, the steep mountains lifted themselves to a height varying from 2,500 to perhaps 4,000 feet. They were now rocky buttresses, and their steep slopes covered with pines and ferns. This canyon is alone worth a trip just to see, and, while it lacks the awful grandeur of the glaciated peaks of the Rockies and Selkirks, yet, being ever so close to our way, is even more terrible and startling than the others.

After leaving it we ran through lower elevations, but through forests of giant cedars — cedars from two to five feet in diameter. But, sad to say, these noble trees a good part of the time stood like blackened spectres, and often were but lofty stumps from five or six to thirty feet high. What wild havoc the fire fiend has been for years and yet is making in the vast forests of the Pacific slope. The air in the Selkirks was blue with smoke, and so was the air from their base clear to the end of the road. The air here on the south side of Vancouver's island is still smoky. From our windows we ought to be able to see Mount Baker's snowy crest far to the west, and the Olympian Mountains, only some twenty odd miles to the south. Instead of that, high hills ten miles away are dimly seen as blue masses above the horizon. Millions of trees such as would be the admiration of people east of the Mississippi, are now burning, and millions upon millions of acres have been within the last five years stripped of their valuable forests, which east of the mountains would be worth many times more than all the gold produced within these few years on the whole Pacific coast, and yet many of the fires which have destroyed such vast wealth have been started by prospectors looking for gold. They burn certain wealth, not their own, above the ground, in the hope of finding uncertain signs of wealth which may become their own, but now hidden below the surface of the forests.

But I am making this letter far too long. I will stop by saying tourists from the east should take the Canadian Pacific either coming west or when returning east. Its scenery on the plains is never monotonous, and often very pleasing, and always interesting. *There is more of grand and glorious scenery twice over than is to be found on both the Northern and the Union Pacific roads.* It was, during my trip, so free from dust that taken altogether it was not disagreeable for fifty miles from Winnipeg to Vancouver. Its sleepers are very fine and its dining-cars as good as one could wish. Its roadbed is smooth and well ballasted. Its bridges seem well built, and the great snowsheds in the Selkirks are marvels of strength and solidity. Many of them are of three depths of cedar piles driven into the earth. Others are built of cedar timbers, from ten to twelve inches square, mortised and bolted together, and held back by timbers mortised into and bolted to them, the whole covered by two-inch cedar boards, spiked down.

They are not only built to shed the snow off, but to shed landslides and snow-torrents. One I saw when the earth was piled above the shed, and earth and monster boulders were in massive confusion far below, having passed over the shed, leaving the track entirely unharmed. At two of the eating stations in the mountains the meals are admirably prepared. The employees I found unusually polite.

There are several stop-over places where the tourist will find glorious scenery and good sport, and stopping will prevent his becoming surfeited with too much grandeur.

And now, from this beautiful land where winter never freezes, and the summer never parches when eight degrees above Chicago, yet where the honeysuckle embowers the verandas and the rose bush is a small tree in the garden; where the cherries are nearly as large as plums, and the red raspberries are as large and pulpy as our finest Lawton blackberry; where the young pine makes a good fishing pole, and the large fir is the whole mast of the largest ship; where cedars are monsters, and the balm of Gilead is as large as a big cottonwood, — from this anomalous clime, good morning.

CARTER H. HARRISON.

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### Extracts from subsequent Letters of Mr. Harrison relating to his Canadian Pacific trip.

VICTORIA, B. C., Aug. 21.—I was saying, before led into digression, that there was the home of a great population in the northwest. I can see into the future, guided by what history tells of the dense populations of the far past, that there will some day be a great people in the cool northwest—greater than in hot and dry California. \* \* \*

Harbors abound everywhere capable of holding the fleets of the world. And all along the coast from Fucus strait up to Alaska are rivers of vast depth running parallel to the ocean and constantly opening into it by safe inlets, along which cheap steamers can go from point to point without the danger of ever encountering a storm which an Ohio river craft may not meet. The Indian of Alaska comes to Tacoma in his dug-out canoe with his whole family, and with as little risk as one could run on the Desplaines river. The largest ship can steam in these inlets and salt rivers without ever hitting upon an unseen danger. There are no shoals, and no hidden rocks; and a vessel can lay its broadside sheer up against the shore anywhere, with no other danger than that of abrasion when lifted or lowered by the tides.

The scenery of the whole northwest is of so grand a character that everything east of the Rockies is comparatively tame. I do not mean to detract from the beauties of our own section. For there is not a hill anywhere that does not furnish, to my eye, a line of beauty. There is not a flowery prairie or a waving field of grain which does not give me delight. There is not a gurgling rivulet which does not sing to me in tones far sweeter than those of the most gifted diva. But here there is more of it all, and on so stupendous a scale that ours are to them what a parlor melody is to a grand chorus, or the eolia singing among the pine needles is to the grand artillery of the storm.

I look out of my window every few moments, and the low mountains of this island present to my mind as fine outlines and as green and beautiful foothills as one can

find anywhere in the Alleghanies; and yet these mountains are but pigmies to those one could see to the south or west from this hotel, if the smoke would but blow away. To see the grandeur of this region one should come before July or after September. Smoke is apt to be the rule in July, August and September. Even in these months the smoke rather softens the near landscape, but it hides the mighty background.

This place ought to and ultimately will be to this coast what Newport is to the east. The rocks along the seashore resemble those at the plutocrat's heaven in Rhode Island, only they are more numerous, and the bays and inlets about would be the delight of the lover of the oars. Some of the inlets are little salt rivers, along which the rising or falling tide sends a current of two or three miles an hour; their shores are covered with beautiful trees, the green firs, spruces, and elders, and the red-barked arbutis bending its gnarly branches among the green foliage, as smooth as if rubbed down with sand paper and as red as if painted by an artist. The wild roses grow as large as lilac bushes and often cover whole acres.

The royal navy yard of Esquimalt looks as if its site had been selected as much to please the eye as for its wonderful roadstead. This roadstead looks like a beautiful lake of a couple of thousand acres; almost circular, surrounded by beautifully wooded hills and rounded trapite rocks, with an inlet of only a few hundred feet, and opening from it a few small interior arms. It is deep enough to receive the largest iron-clad. \* \* \* \* \*

The climate of this great region is to an eastern man even more remarkable than its productions. The thermometer rarely falls much below the freezing point at Victoria, or anywhere west of the Cascade range, and while the days are warm in summer they are never hot, and so far we have required at least two blankets throughout this month. Every cottage is covered with honeysuckle or some other climbing plant, which in the Chicago parks have to be laid and covered in winter. \* \* \* \* \*

The strawberry here blooms early in April, and the wild fruit is nearly as large as ordinary cultivated ones. Along the coast and up to the heights of the Cascades in Washington territory and the Selkirks in British Columbia the air is full of humidity, except in the summer months.

STEAMSHIP PARTHA, VANCOUVER, B. C., Aug. 27.—In my last I stated that my star had set, and I was no longer lucky, because I had lost my trip to Alaska. But I picked up my lucky star again. We abandoned our fishing excursion to Harrison Hot Springs and boarded the train for a longer visit to the great glaciers. \* \* \* \* \*

From Revelstoke, on the Columbia, I rode on the locomotive with jolly Billy Barnfather. May his face never be less round. A few good Havanas made him as good a fellow as ever strode an iron horse. A ride on a locomotive has to me always a fascination. But in a grand mountain country, around countless curves, over lofty trestles, upon the ragged edge of fearful precipices and over dense gorges—such a ride is really glorious. We had to climb up 2,700 feet in about thirty miles. Our horse, with his tender, weighed about a hundred tons. How he would puff and snort, and sometimes almost plunge, to drag after him his mighty load. One riding upon him, after awhile, almost loses his own identity and becomes a part of the mighty monster. Looking forward upon the rails, merely silvery lines drawn upon the road-bed, I forget these rails

are anything more than marks to guide us in our way. The locomotive bends to the right or left like a drunken man as we rush along the curves, and one feels like a drunken man, oneself—one who can walk straight if he wishes, but it feels good to totter and zigzag, so it is done not from necessity, but from agreeable volition. He can walk a chalk line, and he does it. The rails are but lines to guide, not to control.

And so on we rush, never quitting the line a hair's breadth. Yonder is a monster mountain of rock right in our track. Who's afraid? At it we rush headlong, and bore a tunnel through the mass. See yon foaming stream, far over a dark gorge. We rush across it on a trestle as light as gauze-work, and never tremble because of its being so fragile. How we careen and climb! We reach a little level track. We spin along it with a loud scream and stop at a station as still as if we never knew a motion. Miners and road-workers gather about our side, and while they admire we are as quiet as a lamb, conscious of our power.

At last we reach the presence of eternal ice. \* \* \* \* I said I had found my luck. Alaska may be grand, but when I sit on the piazza of the beautiful little chalet hotel, called the Glacier house and watch the sun climbing the mountains and rose-tinting the snows which lie like a light mantle about these lofty heights, and look upon the great glacier with its crevices of delicate green and the gray peaks of cold rock which pierce the blue vault of heaven, and hear the mighty roar of the snow-white cataract which tumbles over a thousand feet down the precipitous foothills a few hundred yards before me; when I sit in this wonderful valley, nestled down among huge mountains on every side, no outlet to be seen, the lower mountain slopes covered with splendid forests, the upper slopes white with eternal snows, and the gray rocks above the snows; these monster peaks so nearly cover me that I must bend back my head to look at them,—then I do not envy any one seeing other sights; these are enough for me, and I scarcely regret that my ship had not come.

It is a delightful thing to sit at Interlaken as the sun sinks and paints the pure brow of the Jungfrau—Switzerland's pride and glory. But there the Unpolluted Maiden is so far off that we cannot feel familiar. But here the mountains are so close that a bee line drawn from where I sit would reach lofty peaks or mountain brows in every direction, at distances varying from two or three to perhaps six or eight miles. These mighty heights are from a mile to a mile and a quarter over the roadbed.

The train from the east to-night brought Prince Devawongse Varoprakan and his nephews, the little princelings of Siam, and their suites.

After a good dinner we were all soon in single-file and armed with improvised alpenstocks, started out to see the great glaciers. We cut pieces of ice and eat it that was formed long before Washington cut the cherry tree, or even before Columbus made an egg stand on end. It was very pure and cold enough to be very old. The little fledglings of Siamese royalty were wonderfully delighted, and like boys began to cut steps into the sloping sides of the glaciers to try to climb it. For this purpose one of their party had provided himself with a hatchet at the hotel. The task, however, was abandoned, when, in a half-hour, they had reached only a few feet. \* \* \* \* \*

Two miles up the road from the Glacier house is the summit of the road in the Selkirk range. Here, from a small snowy gorge, run the two silvery streams which

carry the waters to the east and to the west. The one to the west becomes the Illicilliwaet river, which, until it reaches the Columbia, is always as rapid as a mountain torrent, affording the sightseer constant delight by its cascades and deep canyons. The time is not far distant when tourists will seek this locality as they now do the old scenery of Switzerland. When one first sees the enclosed valley about the station, he is not so much pleased by it as he will be after several days' sojourn among its mountain fastness. He has entered it through so much grand scenery, and his eye has become so accustomed to nature's majestic works that he looks upon this as simply a part of a whole. But after sleeping a night, he looks out in the gray morning upon the cold peaks and then watches until the sun begins to scatter delicate rose tints upon the snow fields, and after a while to lighten up the old glacier, then he sees the surrounding objects as a unit, and takes it in as one of the rare spots to be visited and enjoyed. Walk in any direction for miles and the roar of cataracts is never absent,—scarcely has the sound of one died out before another is heard. There are a half dozen which give out the deep bass undertones of a great fall. \* \* \*

While we were in the heart of the Selkirks we saw the manner in which the Canadian Pacific road builds its snowsheds. There are two between the summit and the hotel which are being united, and will be altogether over a mile long. On the side next the mountain the shed is of strong crib work, built of cedar timber, ten by twelve inches, laid two inches apart, with cross timbers dove-tailed into the two sides of the crib and spiked together with seven-eighths spikes sixteen inches long. This crib is about thirty-five feet high and filled with stone. On the other side, timber of the same size and about five feet apart are spiked upon the massive mud-sills and cross-sills. Upon the cross-sills heavy lean-to supports are mortised into the upright timbers and into the sills, all spiked together. Across the top is a floor of two-inch boards, braced from the centre, and another sloping roof of the same thickness slanting down nearly to the ground on the lower side of the track, completes the shed. The whole roof is as strong as a heavy bridge, over which a fire-engine could rush with safety. \* \* \*

Where the very fine scenery is, there are double tracks—one within the shed for winter use, the other outside, so as to permit the traveler to see during the summer months. Every kind of work on the road seems to be done without regard to cost, but with the determination to make it as perfect as a single-track road can be. The station-houses are, or are to be, all ornamental. Those in the mountains are on the Swiss chalet model. \* \* \*

Let every one who can, make a trip over the road, and let him come prepared to make at least three or four stops—at Banff, Field, Glacier, and somewhere—say Hope—on the Frazer. There is too much for one trip. If one will take ten days or two weeks in making the trip he will be amply repaid. \* \* \*

When we came over, nearly a month ago, we passed the Thompson canyon and a part of the Frazer at night. This time, going up again, we were at night in the same locality. We resolved not to take a sleeper on our return, but to be ready to look out at the first break of day. Amply were we repaid for our loss of sleep. The whirl along the Thompson for fifty miles before reaching the Frazer is through scenery which may fairly be called terrible. Never will I forget the pleasure, tinged with perhaps fear, we

felt as we dashed along precipices on their very edges, a thousand to fifteen hundred feet above the river, which here cuts a narrow chasm through vast rocky mountains only half clad with trees. The character of the country is totally different from anything we had yet seen on the Canadian Pacific road. Sage bush was abundant and the scattered trees were a long-leaved pine instead of fir and spruce. The rocky precipices are reddish in hue, sometimes almost a vermillion. The gorges or canyons are thousands of feet deep, and as awful in character as that of Webber canyon on the Union Pacific. The road in several places seems to hang upon the steep sides of slopes almost perpendicular. \* \* \* \*

I said the pleasure I felt was slightly tinged with fear. The reader will perhaps understand this when I remind him that in passing along this part of the road, and throughout the remainder of the trip, I was riding upon the cowcatcher. \* \* \* \*

One thing is worth observation in the whole dominion of Canada. That is, the far better condition of its Indians and their more peaceful demeanor than that of our own red men. All along this road one sees the aborigines in all their conditions, from well-behaved savages up to more than half-civilized, while in the United States they run from the well-behaved down to the lowest savage. All along the Frazer and Thompson and in the Gold mountains are Indians leading more or less industrious lives. Many of their hamlets or villages have an air of very considerable comfort, and the most of the children have quite intelligent faces and are not illy clad. One constantly sees them at work as railroad hands or about the saw-mills. They cradle logs with skill, and a contractor told me they made very fair hands in snow-shed building. They are good fishermen, and dig out fine canoes. I think it will interest you to be told that many of the large canoes are beautiful models for boats. I examined closely a dug-out this morning. It was upward of thirty feet long and nearly five-foot beam. It was cut or dug from a single stick of cedar, and sat the water like a duck, had a long bowsprit-like proppent on at the bow and a shorter one at the stern—all of the same tree. \* \* \* \*

Now, a few words anent this mushroom town (Vancouver). In June, 1886, it was a shanty-built town of 2,000 people. On the 15th, I think, a fire broke out in one of its board hotels. In thirty-two minutes all was swept away except a railroad freight-house and one other building. The wind was blowing a gale. There had been no rain for a month or more. The wooden buildings were as dry as tinder. The cedar shingles flew like kites, carrying the flames not only to the buildings near by, but also to others a quarter of a mile or more away, thus firing the doomed town in a half-dozen places almost at the same time.

The besom of destruction began its sweep at half-past two o'clock in the afternoon, and ran along in such mad haste that no one saved any personal effects except what covered his back. One of them said to me that it was as much as the people could do to carry off the shirts they wore. At half-past three there was not a standing stick to mark where the town had stood, except two buildings, and they were quite detached from the closer part of the town.

To-day it is a busy, thriving town of from 3,000 to 5,000 souls. Houses are going up in every quarter. Quite a number of them being quite substantial two-story bricks.

Unlike the neighborhood of Solomon's temple, the sound of the hammer fills the air from early morning till night has set in. \* \* \* \* \*

\*The salmon fishing and canning business is quite large near here on the Frazer river, and gives employment to a great many people.

The tales told of the great quantities of fish running up the stream in the spawning season sound like fish yarns, but I am led to believe are scarcely exaggeration. A fireman crawled over the engine when I was perched on the cowcatcher up the Frazer, to tell me the rushing torrent we were about to cross was the Salmon river, and that he had seen the fish so thick near its mouth that one could walk from bank to bank upon them as a bridge. When pushed he admitted that no one had crossed, but that they looked thick enough to make such a bridge. This has been corroborated by several to whom I mentioned the thing.

Another man told me he had to ford a stream on horseback, not far south of the boundary of the United States, and that it was with great difficulty he could get his horse across, so thick were the big fish, and that he killed a large number with a club as he waded through. \* \* \* \*

And now I bid you a long good-by. To-morrow we are promised a certain start, when our race with the sun will, I hope, have no interruption until we shall have reached the land of the mikado. Good-by!

CARTER H. HARRISON.

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\* Since the above was written the company have completed a magnificent hotel at Vancouver, which is now in full operation.



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